

140 N. 16<sup>th</sup> St. Philadelphia

11 mo. 29, 1898

Rufus M. Jones,

My dear friend:

It really seemed to me cruel to write to thee critically in view of thy many burdens and ever-present grief, but I hoped thou would not take my language to thyself, but to the one whom I supposed wrote the editorial, for I fancied thou did not; as I had heard at times language used in that vein by another, — which indeed should be used if the facts were so. And as he (not thou) had included me in "the ring," I took that expression as marking him as the inspirer or writer, and as locating the particular monthly meeting that was meant. Thou couldst not have applied the word to me, and I rather relished it when the other man did. It was amusing,

not an offense, in his case.

I think the "weighty minds" who informed thee, were mistaken as to "matters of fact," if the editorial was practically theirs. Would it be right for them to name their men?

Or is it a ring only when conservatives name their men? The conservatives did not start in with the naming. I find on inquiry that each brought out a name that independently came up to him at the time as a judicious name.

I think they all want to get in a younger class into the overseership, so <sup>only</sup> that they can retain some ripe judgment and experience with them.

I am pleased that thou wrote, not to blame a particular meeting, but to emphasize the question of intention in monthly meetings. The trouble was that with all the controlling intentions

brought into monthly meetings to change them throughout the country, a conservative intention in one was the first to seem blamed - as "a ~~very~~ exception".

Thou art, the one outside of our meeting who ought to know, that if a conservative solicitude as to the sound composition of the overseers did come into operation, it is because it was forced in by the action of our present board of overseers, when they formulated a plan to bring in the stated ministry and paid pastorate system in West Philadelphia under the name of our monthly meeting. This the meeting did not endorse. Lynn endorsed it for East Lynn, and now has got it as a legitimate consequence over herself. So would we have done. So perhaps we may yet get under that system. But when we do, it will be because thy editorial advice is neg-

lected, and faster members bring  
into monthly meeting intentions  
leading that way, as they have  
invariably so led elsewhere. "Is there  
not a cause?"

Pardon me again for slipping  
into the signs of the times;—the coming  
romanism for other churches and the  
coming sacerdotalism for friends. It  
weighs daily with me, and crawls upon  
a letter intended for sympathy. It  
is cruel of any of us when we seem  
to make thee the scape-goat of "all the  
churches" when thou hast no relish for  
all their tumult, but only for the kingdom  
of Christ, wishing now most of all to  
sit down in the quiet and enjoy Him  
who loves thy dear wife so much  
better than thou canst, that He is going  
to take the most precious care of her  
where thou canst trust her and trust  
Him. With love thy friend,  
John H. Dillingham.